

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed March 4, 2008, the Examiner noted that claims 1, 4, 7, 9 and 12-15 were pending and rejected claims 1, 4, 7, 9 and 12-15. Claims 1, 7, 9, 13 and 14 have been amended, no claims have been canceled, new claim 16 has been added; and, thus, in view of the foregoing claims 1, 4, 7, 9 and 12-16 remain pending for reconsideration which is requested. No new matter is believed to have been added. The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed below.

Summary of the Interview

The undersigned respectfully thanks the Examiner for conducting the Interview, on June 3, 2008, at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Independent claims 1, 7, 9, 13 and 14 have been amended to further clarify the features of the invention, as well as, distinguish over Moreno, as discussed at the Interview of June 3, 2008. Therefore, comments discussed below are based on the Interview of June 3, 2008.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action, on page 2, rejected claims 1, 4, 7, 9 and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Moreno (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0035515).

Moreno is related to a system that utilizes, coordinates, delivers, and securely stores goods at a location remote from the merchant of such goods (see paragraph [0001] of Moreno). Particularly, according to Moreno, when a customer requests delivery of goods from a vendor, the delivery of the goods are coordinated to a secure locker from which the goods can be retrieved at the customer own convenience (see paragraph [0001] of Moreno).

However, it is submitted that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over Moreno, as Moreno fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, the features of claim 1, as recited below:

receiving, at a delivery goods management apparatus, a request to confirm reception of delivery goods entered by a deliverer when a recipient of the delivery goods from the location is absent, wherein the request includes a message to confirm as to whether the recipient approves or rejects delivery of the goods by the deliverer to the location;

extracting recipient information from a storage unit of the delivery goods management apparatus, where the storage unit stores the recipient information corresponding to information related to the request to confirm reception of the delivery goods; and

transmitting a notification, from the delivery goods management apparatus, to said recipient of confirmation request information based on the recipient information while the recipient is absent from the location, said method further

comprising:

further storing information for a deliverer corresponding to delivery goods identification information in said storage unit and receiving the delivery goods identification information and reception approval/refusal information entered by said recipient;

extracting the deliverer information relevant to the delivery goods identification information from said storage unit; and

notifying said deliverer of the reception approval/refusal information based on the deliverer information, so that the deliverer delivers the goods when a result of the reception approval/refusal information indicates an approval of the delivery of the goods by the recipient

(claim 1, lines 3-19).

According to Moreno, after a customer request has been received by the service provider and the request has been processed, the goods are delivered to a storage unit, i.e. a locker, common to the recipient and the deliverer (see paragraphs [0052] and [0053] of Moreno). However, such a delivery of the goods has nothing to do with "when a recipient of the delivery goods from the location is absent" as in claim 1.

Further, according to Moreno, when the deliverer arrives at the storage unit, the deliverer provides a tracking code, access code, or other verification information (see paragraph [0064] of Moreno). As a result, the provided code is compared with an authorized code at the service provider server so the locker may be unlocked (see paragraphs [0064] and [0065] of Moreno).

In claim 1, however, "a request to confirm reception of delivery goods entered by a deliverer" is received at a delivery goods management apparatus "when a recipient of the delivery goods from the location is absent". Moreno does not disclose, either expressly or implicitly, the feature of claim 1, as quoted above, because Moreno is merely concerned with entering authorization information to open a locker, rather than providing "a request to confirm reception of delivery of goods ... when a recipient of the delivery goods from the location is absent".

In addition, according to Moreno, upon delivering / picking-up the goods and securing the locker by the deliverer, the system notifies the server and the customer of the goods-delivery / pick-up (see paragraph [0066] of Moreno). However, in claim 1 the "recipient information" is extracted "from a storage unit" and a notification is transmitted to "said recipient of [the] confirmation request information based on the recipient information while the recipient is absent from the location".

Moreno fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, the feature of claim 1, as quoted above, because Moreno is merely concerned with notifying the server and customer when a deliver makes a pickup or delivery, instead of "transmitting a notification ... to said recipient of *confirmation request information* ... while the recipient is absent from the location" as in claim 1.

According to Moreno, when a pick-up is requested, the process continues with the estimation and notification of a return date, required pick-up time, or other time constraints, if any (see paragraph [0067] of Moreno). For example, the system might be configured to notify a customer that the heated locker will only remain at 200 degrees for 45 minutes, after which time the heating of the locker may terminate and the food contained therein may cool down and/or spoil (see paragraph [0067] of Moreno). Stated another way, paragraph [0067] of Moreno is merely concerned with notifying the customer of information related to the good stored in the locker, i.e. how long the food can be stored in a locker.

However, in claim 1 "reception approval/refusal information entered by said recipient" is received at the delivery goods management apparatus and, in response, the deliverer is notified "of the reception approval/refusal information ... so that the deliverer delivers the goods when a result of the reception approval/refusal information indicates an approval of the delivery of the goods by the recipient".

Paragraph [0067] of Moreno fails to disclose, either expressly or inherently, the features of claim 1, as quoted above, because paragraph [0067] of Moreno is merely concerned with notifying the customer of information related to the good stored in the locker, instead of "notifying said deliverer the of the reception approval/refusal information ... so that the deliverer delivers the goods when a result of the reception approval/refusal information indicates an approval of the delivery of the goods by the recipient", as in claim 1.

Therefore, in light of the above discussion, it is submitted that claim 1 is patentable over Moreno.

Independent claims 7, 9, 13 and 14 recite features similar in claim 1. Therefore, it is submitted that claims 7, 9, 13 and 14 are patentable over Moreno for reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to claim 1.

The dependent claims are also patentable over Moreno for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims, from which they depend.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

New Claim

New claim 16 is added to emphasize the feature of "transmitting, from the apparatus to the deliverer, a notification of the response received from the recipient so that the goods are delivered by the deliverer based on a result of the response", which is not found to be disclosed, either expressly or inherently, by Moreno. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 16 is patentable over Moreno.

Summary

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.


Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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